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Message Text

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43
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 AID-20 /139 W
---------- 102791
R 311400Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7946
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 4730

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CG, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS: THAW COMES SLOWLY

REF: KINSHASA 4112, BRUSSELS 3013

SUMMARY. BELGIAN ZAIRIAN RELATIONS ARE MAKING ONLY SLOW PROGRESS FOLLOWING THE COMMUNIQUES ISSUED IN KINSHASA AND BRUSSELS ON MAY 10. THEY SHOULD IMPROVE AFTER PRESENT AMBASSADOR DEPARTS, BUT THEY MAY NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MAY 30 BELGIAN AMBASSADOR VANDEN BLOOCK GAVE ME FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON STATE OF GOB-GOZ RELATIONS SINCE MAY 10. GOZ GAVE ITS AGREMENT TO NOMINATION OF NEW BELGIAN AMBASSADOR KERREMANS IN NOTE DATED MAY 21, BUT DELIVERED NOT IN BRUSSELS RATHER THEN HERE. KERREMANS IS TO ARRIVE IN EARLY JULY. VANDEN BLOOCK HAS OFFICIALLY INFORMED DEPTFONAF THAT HE PLANS TO DEPART ON JUNE 25 AND HAS REQUESTED FAREWELL AUDIENCES WITH MOBUTU AND TOP OFFICIALS. HE WILL FOLLOW THROUGH WITH PERSONAL CALL TO DEPTFONAFF DIRECTOR GENERAL BOLELA IF REPLY IS SLOW IN COMING.

2. ACCESS BY BELGIAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO GOZ OFFICIALS
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HAS BEEN SPOTTY SINCD MOBUTU ANNOUNCED THAT GOB-GOZ RELA-

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TIONS HAVE BECOME "ORDINARY." WITH ONE OR TWO EXCEPTIONS OFFICIALS IN PRESIDENCY HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO GRANT APPOINTMENTS. IN DEPTFONAFF ACCESS HAS BECOME EASY AT LEVELS BELOW THAT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL. AMONG STATE COMMISSIONERS, EKETEBI, (TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS), HAS STOOD OUT BY HIS WILLINGNESS TO RENEW OFFICIAL CONTACTS WITHOUT RESERVATIONS. VANDEN BLOOCK DOES NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT GOZ MAY ENVISAGE PLACING BELGIAN EMBASSY ON A PAR WITH EMBASSIES WHOSE NATIONAL INTERESTS HERE ARE RELATIVELY SMALL.

3. VANDEN BLOOCK SAID GOB IS SO BUSY THESE DAYS SEEKING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AMONG BELGIAN POLITICAL PARTIES IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY THAT IT IS NOT GIVING MUCH ATTENTION TO ZAIRE. HOWEVER, PUBLIC SENTIMENT IN BELGIUM HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF GROWING ALIENATION FROM ZAIRE. AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FACTION WANTS TO CEASE CONCENTRATING SO MUCH AID HERE; UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FIND TOO MUCH AUTOCRACY AND CRONYISM IN THE MOBUTU REGIME; AND SOME LEADING JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE LONG COUNSELED PATIENCE WITH MOBUTU HAVE BEGUN TO SWITCH.

4. VANDEN BLOOCK WAS IN EXCELLENT HUMOR AND SHOWED NO BITTERNESS OVER COLD SHOULDER TREATMENT HE HAS RECEIVED FROM GOZ SINCE NOVEMBER 30. HE BELIEVES SPLIT BETWEEN GOB AND GOZ MAY HAVE BEEN INEVITABLE GIVEN TREND OF MOBUTU'S POLICIES SINCE HIS OCTOBER 4 SPEECH AT UN AND EVOLUTION OF BELGIAN INTERNAL SITUATION. HE COMMENTED WRYLY THAT HE TOOK SOME COMFORT FROM FACT THAT IN MOBUTU'S LAST STADIUM SPEECH, ON MAY 19, HE REFRAINED FROM ATTACKING THE GOB AS SUCH ALTHOUGH HE WAS HARD ON BELGIUM IN GENERAL.

5. COMMENT: ONE REASON FOR SLOW RESUMPTION OF NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BELGIAN EMBASSY AND GOZ IS CERTAINLY PRESENCE OF VANDEN BLOOCK HIMSELF. HAVING INCURRED MOBUTU'S DISPLEASURE WHEN HE WALKED OUT DURING THE NOVEMBER 30 SPEECH, HE HAS BECOME A MARKED MAN FOR MANY ZAIRIANS ALTHOUGH PERSONALLY POPULAR AMONG THEM. ARRIVAL OF NEW AMBASSADOR SHOULD PERMIT TURNING OF PAGE. NEVERTHELESS PROSPECTS NOW SEEM DIM FOR FULL RESUMPTION OF OLD TIES.
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ANDREW

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